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SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

TIME OF THE SUBSCRIPTIONS

FOR

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS,

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

TIME OF THE SUBSCRIPTIONS

FOR

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS,

SET ON FOOT UNDER SANCTION OF PARLIAMENT,

AND WHEN A PROCLAMATION WAS READ FOR A

General Fast Day.

BY A CLERGYMAN

OF THE

COUNTY OF KENT.

A TRUE, SINCERE, AND FIRM FRIEND TO, AND LOVER OF,

HIS KING AND COUNTRY.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

London:

PRINTED FOR F. AND C. RIVINGTON,
NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1798.

Whatever clear Profits arise therefrom, are to go for the Use and Benefit of the Society of the Sons of the Clergy.

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Whatever clear Truths and Doctrines, are to go for the Life and Breath of the Society or the Sons of the Clergy.

A

SERMON.

PSALM CXXII. 6, 7, 8, 9.

O pray for the peace of Jeruſalem, They ſhall proſper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteouſneſs within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' ſake, I will wiſh thee proſperity; Yea, becauſe of the houſe of the Lord our God, I will ſeek to do thee good.

THESE words expreſs an affectionate exhortation of king David to his ſubjects and countrymen to ſhew their zeal for their mother city Jeruſalem, by offering up their prayers to God for her welfare and proſperity. In the performance of this duty he not only leads them by his example, but hath, in the words of the text, put a ſong of bleſſing and prayer in their mouths, and

expreſſes his own good wiſhes to his country, in a ſtrain of ſo much life and beauty, as muſt naturally raiſe the like public concern and affection in OTHERS. I cannot therefore tell where BETTER to direct your thoughts, at this awful and momentous period of time, than to the WORDS OF THE TEXT; from WHENCE I ſhall endeavour to recommend to you that public affection and love to our country which is ſo agreeably expreſſed in them; and ſhew PARTICULARLY what are the PRESENT duties to which this love of our country calls US. The love of our country is a principle which hath been more celebrated in all ages, than any other affection in the whole train of virtues. By our country, when we conſider it as the object of our affection, is certainly meant that body of men who are united with us in our community under the SAME laws and government, and in a league of mutual defence and ſupport. If we are ready to defend the lives and properties of our fellow-countrymen at the hazard of our own, if we are ready to

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oppoſe ourſelves the foremoſt againſt the invaſions of FOREIGN, or the uſurpations of domeſtic, tyranny, THIS is plainly virtue of the higheſt and moſt diſintereſted kind. A love of our country is, in THESE INSTANCES, a love of JUSTICE, a love of CHARITY, a deſire to contribute to the welfare and happineſs of all about us, and to protect them from WRONG, OPPRESSION, and CONFUSION. HERE THEN is the true FOUNDATION of that virtue which is ſo deſervedly applauded in this character. It conſiſts in a generous regard to the common happineſs and welfare of mankind, PARTICULARLY in the ſociety and community in which we live, which is certainly the nobleſt cauſe in which the heart of man can be engaged, and in which HE, who deſerves the name of patriot, muſt think his fortune and life well embarked and engaged.

A LOVE OF OUR COUNTRY implies in it a love of the laws and conſtitution by which it is governed, and THAT government has the beſt right to our affection and ſervice, in which the common rights of mankind are

beſt protected and ſecured to us. HERE THEN let us apply this obſervation to our own uſe and inſtruction. There never was, perhaps, a country or government in the world, where the natural liberties and enjoyments of mankind were more effectually ſecured to all the members of it, than that under WHICH WE live. It is our happineſs not to be governed by the arbitrary will of an abſolute monarch, but by wholeſome and GOOD LAWS; to have the ADMINISTRATION of THESE LAWS in the hands of a ſovereign who owns himſelf THEIR ſubject, and who never aſſumes the power of altering, or repealing the force of them; which is an happineſs unknown to moſt other countries.

And THIS leads me to mention ANOTHER bleſſing of the higheſt value to our country, and THAT is, the free poſſeſſion of the pureſt religion in the world, the intereſt of which is inſeparably connected with that conſtitution and government by which it is protected and eſtabliſhed. They have both the ſame common enemies, and muſt ſtand or fall together. THIS therefore is ANOTHER conſide-

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ration which ought greatly to endear our country to us, and which the royal Pſalmiſt likewiſe mentions as a ground of his pious affection to Jeruſalem. We have in the ſecurity of our civil and religious rights every public advantage in the higheſt perfection that any nation can boaſt of, and, conſequently, if the love of our country be IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES a duty, it is in an extraordinary manner binding upon US; and it is with cogent reaſon that this generous principle has hitherto ſo eminently prevailed, and will, I hope and truſt, always prevail amongſt us.

WHAT are the PROPER EXPRESSIONS of this affection, or the duties implied in this character, may be eaſily collected from WHAT HAS BEEN SAID. THEY ARE, in our ſeveral ſtations, to promote the common INTEREST of our country, to be obedient to the government we are under, and to ſerve diligently the offices aſſigned us in it. It muſt be left to thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed by a PUBLIC CHARACTER, and who are

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bleſſed with talents and abilities for the CHARGES they ſuſtain, to protect it by their COUNCILS, and defend it by their COURAGE. It is the duty of every PRIVATE SUBJECT to ſubmit peaceably to the laws of THAT government he is under, and THAT not only for WRATH or a FEAR OF PUNISHMENT, but alſo for CONSCIENCE SAKE. It is his duty to ſtrengthen the hands of the government, to remove every impediment out of its way, and NOT to weaken it by ſpreading faction, diſcontent, and a love of FALSE liberty among the people; to contribute CHEERFULLY his PROPORTION of thoſe SUPPLIES which the exigencies of the ſtate may make it neceſſary to DEMAND. And NOT ONLY THIS, but MORE ESPECIALLY at a moment when a war is obſtinately perſiſted in by our enemies, for the purpoſe of utterly deſtroying not only the conſtitution, the religious and civil rights, but alſo the national independence of theſe kingdoms, it behoves us, of every rank and deſcription, to come forward

forward and exert ourſelves with all our zeal and energy, to defeat, IF GOD PERMITS, the hoſtile and deſtructive deſigns of ſo inveterate a foe.

I cannot THEN, on a better OCCASION, and in a better PLACE, take notice of THAT LAUDABLE and PATRIOTIC SPIRIT that is gone abroad through theſe realms, is diffuſed, and farther diffuſing itſelf through every part thereof; AND, I TRUST and am confident, will not eſcape the notice of THIS PARISH. When the FIRST PERSONAGE in the kingdom, when public bodies, public characters, when army and navy, individuals of EVERY deſcription, ſtep forward in ſo ſpirited and patriotic a manner, both high and low, rich and poor, one with another, LET OUR HANDS be ſtretched out, on this noble occaſion, as well the ECCLESIASTICAL AND THE CIVIL, as the MILITARY AND MARITIME diviſions and capacities of THIS COUNTY, to contribute our mite to ſtrengthen the ſinews of the amiable and happy government we live under. This will ſhew forth to the world in general, and

and our enemies in PARTICULAR, that we acknowledge a GOD and PROVIDENCE, that we honour and love our KING, reverence and obey the CONSTITUTION and GOVERNMENT; that we are jealous of our TRUE, ESSENTIAL, and CHRISTIAN LIBERTIES; revere and love the HOLY SCRIPTURES; that we can put on the helmet of SALVATION; that we can wear the ſhield of FAITH; the breaſt-plate of RIGHTEOUSNESS; that we can draw the ſword of the SPIRIT, and have our feet ſhod with the preparation of the GOSPEL OF PEACE, to ſtand forth and meet the enemies and blaſphemers of GOD, the rooters up of all GOVERNMENTS, the turners UPSIDE DOWN of all nations throughout Europe, and every OTHER PART of the world, where they can erect their diabolical, cruel, and oppreſſive STANDARD.

BUT THAT this patriotic STEP may meet with ſucceſs, and have its due influence and effect for our good and proſperity, let us more particularly conſider OTHER SPECIAL AND URGENT duties, to which this love of

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our country at preſent calls us, and they are, THOSE of humbling ourſelves under a ſenſe of THOSE SINS which may provoke God to withdraw his mercies from us, THOUGH he has hitherto ſhewed them in an exemplary manner, and far beyond our DESERTS; AND, imploring the aſſiſtance and bleſſing of heaven on his majeſty's arms; which have been taken up, NOT upon a vain principle of AMBITION, to gratify the reſentment of an ANGRY, or the pride of an ASPIRING monarch, BUT, after repeated invitations to peace which have been refuſed him, in defence of the plaineſt rights, and SUCH as all mankind have ever juſtly claimed.

BUT THOUGH, from the goodneſs of our cauſe, as well as the wiſdom of our councils, and the ſtrength of our fleets and armies, we have the moſt reaſonable hopes of ultimate ſucceſs, YET it is a truth which reaſon and experience, as well as religion, teach us, that the race is not ALWAYS to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong; that the EVENT of all things is in the hand of God, and that

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the fate of nations is weighed and determined by HIM.

If, therefore, in the common occurrences of life, it is our wiſdom and intereſt, as well as our duty, to look up to Heaven for a bleſſing on our labours and endeavours, it is certainly a FAR MORE indiſpenſable duty in us on occaſions of ſo GREAT importance. A PRESUMPTUOUS CONFIDENCE in our own STRENGTH might itſelf juſtly provoke God to give us up into the hands of our enemies; and, on the OTHER HAND, a pious truſt in his mercy may be a powerful means to draw down his bleſſing and aſſiſtance in our favour. Our enemies have probably their philoſophical deities to apply to on this occaſion, let US leave them to THEIR protection, and let us chooſe, on OUR PART, the LORD for OUR GOD. In HIS NAME will we continue to ſet up our banners, WHO ALONE giveth victory unto kings, and ſaveth from the peril of the ſword.

Let US then humble ourſelves in the ſight of God under a ſenſe of our ſins, leſt they

ſhould

ſhould provoke him to ſtop his career of kindneſſes towards us, and withdraw his mercies from us.

It was given in ſpecial charge to the people of Iſrael, and made a part of their law, that when the hoſt went forth againſt the enemy, THEN they ſaid, keep yourſelves from every wicked thing;—if they expected God ſhould declare for them in the day of war, they were to ſanctify themſelves to the Lord, and to put away all evil from among them.—For the SAME PIOUS REASONS, WE are called upon at this awful and momentous PERIOD of time, together with our DEVOTIONS, to enter upon a reformation of life and manners, in order to procure the favour of Heaven to our cauſe. In VAIN we offer up our prayers to God, if we continue in a ſtate of diſobedience to his laws. If we expect the bleſſing of Heaven to attend us, we muſt ENDEAVOUR to procure it; if we would make GOD our friend, we muſt forſake thoſe ſins which ſet us at enmity with him.

GREAT INDEED and DIFFICULT is the undertaking to reform a corrupt age, BUT we ſhould therefore apply ourſelves to the work with a diligence ſuitable to the IMPORTANCE and NECESSITY of it.

Let THOSE who are in authority ſhew their zeal in EXECUTING the LAWS FOR THAT PURPOSE, in SUPPRESSING the public and known TEMPTATIONS to LEWDNESS and DEBAUCHERY, and in PUNISHING THAT PROFANENESS which triumphs openly in our ſtreets.

Let THOSE, whoſe rank and character give weight to their example, ſhew their ſenſe of religion by a conſtant attendance upon the offices of it, and by a ſtrict ſobriety of life and manners, that ſo OTHERS may be won by their converſation, to think on the evil of their ways.

Let EVERY ONE in his INDIVIDUAL capacity, contribute his endeavour to reduce and leſſen the weight of public guilt, by at leaſt reforming and amending himſelf, and unite in

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our prayers and in every good work, that God may be entreated for the land.

Let US ALL look at that miſerable country acroſs the ſea, and take warning in TIME; let the FOLLY of that nation keep us WISE; let it teach us to hold faſt the bleſſed hope that is given us in the HOLY SCRIPTURES; WHICH teach us to love and fear GOD, who ſees all our actions, and will ſurely reward the juſt; and WHO has ALREADY ſhewn thoſe who renounce HIM, that to him vengeance belongeth. THERE the Son of God ſets the example of ſubmiſſion to lawful authority; THERE we are taught to love God, and honour the king; the authority of whoſe government protects US, our CHILDREN and PROPERTY, from ruffians who would plunder and lay waſte our dwelling place.

BY THIS MEANS we may enſure to ourſelves and poſterity LAWFUL liberty, SECURITY to our POSSESSIONS, SAFETY to our LIVES, and, ABOVE ALL, the free worſhip of THAT ALL-MERCIFUL GOD, who has so OFTEN, during this dreadful conflict with our inveterate

inveterate enemies, afforded us wonderful deliverances and ſignal victories!

Let us THEN reform OURSELVES and our LIVES, and in the church, every Sunday AT LEAST, worſhip in holy brotherhood THAT GREAT AND GOOD GOD, whoſe wiſdom has placed us EACH in the STATION fitteſt for us; let us reflect on THAT and be contented WITH it; and doing our duty THEREIN, tarry the Lord's leiſure, comfort our hearts in this heavy time of trouble, rebuke, and blaſphemy, and put our truſt in the Lord. Let us unite in bonds of chriſtian love, friendſhip, and harmony, with one heart and ſoul in this truly awful and glorious cauſe; let this our enſign of patriotic ſpirit be raiſed on the higheſt pinnacle of this empire, that it may be ſeen and known throughout the world, and more eſpecially to our enemies. May it riſe in the EAST, AS WELL AS here in the NORTH, take it's courſe round to the SOUTH, and never may it ſet in the WEST, until it has accompliſhed it's truly chriſtian magnanimous and bleſſed purpoſes,

that

that ſo the NORTHERN, EASTERN, WESTERN, and SOUTHERN departments of the ſame in BOTH hemiſpheres may rejoice together at THAT HAPPY EVENT; every member thereof may be fitly and compactly joined together in one holy, chriſtian, ſpiritual, and temporal body, may be ſtrong and vigorous, healthy and proſperous, each one take their reſpective parts in hymns and ſpiritual ſongs, and then ALL unite in ONE GRAND AND SOLEMN CHORUS of hallelujahs to the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, through all the ages of this world, until HIS ALMIGHTY FIAT goes forth to create a new Heaven and a new earth.

So may we piouſly hope, that God will go forth with our fleets and armies, and command deliverances for Jacob, THAT through HIM we ſhall caſt down our enemies, and keep THEM under that riſe up againſt us. So ſhall we not only conſult the peace and proſperity of this our Jeruſalem, but ſhall provide in the beſt manner for our FUTURE peace and happineſs in a BETTER country, and

and ſhall be received as true ſons and citizens of THAT Jeruſalem which is ABOVE.

Now to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, &c. &c. &c.

7 JU 66

FINIS.